

BRIEFING PAPER FOR THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE

August 22, 1962

Subject: Soviet Ships Carrying Troops and Military Equipment to Cuba

QUESTION: Do you have any comment on the various reports of the Soviet Union sending troops and military equipment to Cuba?

CURRENT SITUATION REPORT

An analysis of information obtained from Cuban refugees and a variety of other reports indicates that: five Soviet passenger ships and eleven cargo ships arrived in Cuba during the period of July 27-31. At least 15 more cargo ships are on the way. The passenger ships contained about 3,000 and possibly as many as 5,000 Soviet personnel and the cargo ships probably contained highly sophisticated military hardware and communications equipment. The unloading was handled exclusively by Soviet personnel under maximum security conditions at various Cuban ports. One of the passenger ships, containing 400 genuine agricultural experts and technicians, arrived publicly. The other four vessels arrived secretly and all indications are that they carried Soviet military personnel under the guise of "advisors" and "technicians."

SUGGESTED POINTS IN REPLY

1. We know about the recent arrivals of Soviet passenger and cargo ships in Cuba.
2. We are not certain what they contained, but it appears that substantial numbers of technicians of various kinds were aboard.